

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS  
HOUSTON DIVISION**

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

**v.**

**VICTOR MARTINEZ,  
Defendant.**

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**CRIMINAL NO. 4:20-CR-231 (02)**

**PLEA AGREEMENT**

The United States of America, by and through Jennifer B. Lowery, Acting United States Attorney for the Southern District of Texas, and Richard W. Bennett, Assistant United States Attorney, and the defendant, Victor Martinez (“Defendant”), and Defendant’s counsel, pursuant to Rule 11(c)(1)(A) and 11(c)(1)(B) of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure, state that they have entered into an agreement, the terms and conditions of which are as follows:

**Defendant’s Agreement**

1. Defendant agrees to plead guilty to Counts Four and Five of the indictment. Count Four charges Defendant with Conspiracy to Harbor Illegal Aliens, in violation of Title 8, United States Code, Section 1324(a)(1)(A)(iii), in violation of Title 8, United States Code, Sections 1324(a)(1)(A)(v)(I) and (a)(1)(B)(i). Count Five charges Defendant with Possession of a Firearm by an Illegal Alien, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 922(g)(5)(A) and 924(a)(2). Defendant, by entering this plea, agrees that he is waiving any right to have the facts that the law makes essential to the punishment either charged in the indictment, or proved to a jury or proven beyond a reasonable doubt.

**Punishment Range**

2. The **statutory** maximum penalty for a violation of Title 8, United States Code, Section 1324(a)(1)(A)(v)(I) and (a)(1)(B)(i), is imprisonment of not more than ten years and a fine of not

more than \$250,000.00. Additionally, Defendant may receive a term of supervised release after imprisonment of up to three years. *See* Title 18, United States Code, sections 3559(a)(3) and 3583(b)(2). The statutory maximum penalty for a violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 922(g)(5)(A), is imprisonment of not more than ten years and a fine of not more than \$250,000.00. Additionally, Defendant may receive a term of supervised release after imprisonment of up to three years. *See* Title 18, United States Code, sections 3559(a)(3) and 3583(b)(2). Defendant acknowledges and understands that if he should violate the conditions of any period of supervised release which may be imposed as part of his sentence, then Defendant may be imprisoned for up to two years, without credit for time already served on the term of supervised release prior to such violation. *See* Title 18, United States Code, sections 3559(a)(3) and 3583(e)(3). Defendant understands that he cannot have the imposition or execution of the sentence suspended, nor is he eligible for parole.

#### **Mandatory Special Assessment**

3. Pursuant to Title 18, United States Code, section 3013(a)(2)(A), immediately after sentencing, Defendant will pay to the Clerk of the United States District Court a special assessment in the amount of one hundred dollars (\$100.00) per count of conviction. Further, under the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015, in addition to the assessment imposed under section 3013, the court shall assess an amount of \$5,000 on any non-indigent person or entity convicted of an offense under, *inter alia*, section 274 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1324) (relating to human smuggling), unless the person induced, assisted, abetted, or aided only an individual who at the time of such action was the alien's spouse, parent, son, or daughter (and no other individual) to enter the United States in violation of law.

The payment will be by cashier's check or money order, payable to the Clerk of the United States District Court, c/o District Clerk's Office, P.O. Box 61010, Houston, Texas 77208, Attention: Finance.

### **Immigration Consequences**

4. Defendant recognizes that pleading guilty may have consequences with respect to his immigration status. Defendant understands that if he is not a citizen of the United States, by pleading guilty he may be removed from the United States, denied citizenship, and denied admission to the United States in the future. Defendant understands that if he is a naturalized United States citizen, pleading guilty may result in immigration consequences, such as denaturalization and potential deportation or removal from the United States. Defendant's attorney has advised Defendant of the potential immigration consequences resulting from Defendant's plea of guilty, and Defendant affirms that he wants to plead guilty regardless of any immigration consequences that may result from the guilty plea and conviction.

### **Waiver of Appeal and Collateral Review**

5. Defendant is aware that Title 28, United States Code, section 1291, and Title 18, United States Code, section 3742, afford a defendant the right to appeal the conviction and sentence imposed. Defendant is also aware that Title 28, United States Code, section 2255, affords the right to contest or "collaterally attack" a conviction or sentence after the judgment of conviction and sentence has become final. Defendant knowingly and voluntarily waives the right to appeal or "collaterally attack" the conviction and sentence, except that Defendant does not waive the right to raise a claim of ineffective assistance of counsel on direct appeal, if otherwise permitted, or on collateral review in a motion under Title 28, United States Code, section 2255. In the event

Defendant files a notice of appeal following the imposition of the sentence or later collaterally attacks his conviction or sentence, the United States will assert its rights under this agreement and seek specific performance of these waivers.

6. In agreeing to these waivers, Defendant is aware that a sentence has not yet been determined by the Court. Defendant is also aware that any estimate of the possible sentencing range under the sentencing guidelines that he may have received from his counsel, the United States or the Probation Office, is a prediction and not a promise, did not induce his guilty plea, and is not binding on the United States, the Probation Office or the Court. The United States does not make any promise or representation concerning what sentence the defendant will receive. Defendant further understands and agrees that the United States Sentencing Guidelines are “effectively advisory” to the Court. *See United States v. Booker*, 543 U.S. 220 (2005). Accordingly, Defendant understands that, although the Court must consult the Sentencing Guidelines and must take them into account when sentencing Defendant, the Court is not bound to follow the Sentencing Guidelines nor sentence Defendant within the calculated guideline range.

7. Defendant understands and agrees that each and all waivers contained in the Agreement are made in exchange for the concessions made by the United States in this plea agreement.

#### **The United States' Agreements**

8. The United States agrees to each of the following:

- (a) If Defendant pleads guilty to Counts Four and Five of the indictment and persists in that plea through sentencing, and if the Court accepts this plea agreement, the United States will move to dismiss any remaining counts of the indictment at the time of sentencing;
- (b) If the Court determines that Defendant qualifies for an adjustment under section 3E1.1(a) of the United States Sentencing Guidelines, and the offense level prior to operation of section 3E1.1(a) is 16 or greater, the United States will move

under section 3E1.1(b) for an additional one-level reduction because Defendant timely notified authorities of his intent to plead guilty, thereby permitting the United States to avoid preparing for trial and permitting the United States and the Court to allocate their resources more efficiently.

#### **Agreement Binding - Southern District of Texas Only**

9. The United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Texas agrees that it will not further criminally prosecute Defendant in the Southern District of Texas for offenses arising from conduct charged in the indictment. This plea agreement binds only the United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Texas and Defendant. It does not bind any other United States Attorney's Office. The United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Texas will bring this plea agreement and the full extent of Defendant's cooperation to the attention of other prosecuting offices, if requested.

#### **United States' Non-Waiver of Appeal**

10. The United States reserves the right to carry out its responsibilities under guidelines sentencing. Specifically, the United States reserves the right:

- (a) to bring its version of the facts of this case, including its evidence file and any investigative files, to the attention of the Probation Office in connection with that office's preparation of a presentence report;
- (b) to set forth or dispute sentencing factors or facts material to sentencing;
- (c) to seek resolution of such factors or facts in conference with Defendant's counsel and the Probation Office;
- (d) to file a pleading relating to these issues, in accordance with section 6A1.2 of the United States Sentencing Guidelines and Title 18, United States Code, section 3553(a); and
- (e) to appeal the sentence imposed or the manner in which it was determined.

### **Sentence Determination**

11. Defendant is aware that the sentence will be imposed after consideration of the United States Sentencing Guidelines and Policy Statements, which are only advisory, as well as the provisions of Title 18, United States Code, section 3553(a). Defendant nonetheless acknowledges and agrees that the Court has authority to impose any sentence up to and including the statutory maximum set for the offense(s) to which Defendant pleads guilty, and that the sentence to be imposed is within the sole discretion of the sentencing judge after the Court has consulted the applicable Sentencing Guidelines. Defendant understands and agrees that the parties' positions regarding the application of the Sentencing Guidelines do not bind the Court and that the sentence imposed is within the discretion of the sentencing judge. If the Court should impose any sentence up to the maximum established by statute, or should the Court order any or all of the sentences imposed to run consecutively, Defendant cannot, for that reason alone, withdraw a guilty plea, and will remain bound to fulfill all of the obligations under this plea agreement.

### **Rights at Trial**

12. Defendant understands that by entering into this agreement, he surrenders certain rights as provided in this plea agreement. Defendant understands that the rights of a defendant include the following:

(a) If Defendant persisted in a plea of not guilty to the charges, defendant would have the right to a speedy jury trial with the assistance of counsel. The trial may be conducted by a judge sitting without a jury if Defendant, the United States, and the court all agree.

(b) At a trial, the United States would be required to present witnesses and other evidence against Defendant. Defendant would have the opportunity to confront those witnesses and his attorney would be allowed to cross-examine them. In turn, Defendant could, but would not be required to, present witnesses and other evidence on his own behalf. If the witnesses for Defendant would not appear

voluntarily, he could require their attendance through the subpoena power of the court; and

(c) At a trial, Defendant could rely on a privilege against self-incrimination and decline to testify, and no inference of guilt could be drawn from such refusal to testify. However, if Defendant desired to do so, he could testify on his own behalf.

### **Factual Basis for Guilty Plea**

13. Defendant is pleading guilty because he is in fact guilty of the charges contained in Counts Four and Five of the indictment. If this case were to proceed to trial, the United States could prove each element of the offense beyond a reasonable doubt. The following facts, among others, would be offered to establish Defendant's guilt:

On March 16, 2020, Houston Police and Harris County Sheriff Office (HCSO) deputies executed a search warrant at 1704 Warwick Rd., Houston, TX, following the report of an aggravated kidnapping, where the victim was taken at gun point, by a man in a black Dodge Charger to a house. The victim escaped, called the police, and identified the location of the house on Warwick Rd. When officers arrived at the Warwick residence, the defendant **Victor Martinez**, exited the residence and was taken into custody, and later positively identified by the victim as the one who took her. Upon a search of the defendant's vehicle, a black Dodge Charger, pursuant to a warrant, officers found a loaded black and silver, Ruger 40 caliber pistol, Ruger SR 40C (serial #343-13339), manufactured in Arizona. **Martinez** is an alien, illegally in the United States.

Officers then approached the house and knocked on the door. The co-defendant, Eneas Ramos, came out of the house and was detained. People were also observed jumping out of the window near the rear of the residence. Officers were able to take custody of three Sri-Lankan subjects, a Honduran and two Mexican nationals, all illegal aliens, unlawfully present in the United States. During an interview, one of the aliens, K.A. explained that she, her husband/boyfriend, and another Sri Lankan have been in the house for approximately one week after being brought to Houston from McAllen, TX. After crossing into the US, the three were picked up from a parking lot in McAllen by a Hispanic male driving a black Dodge Charger, identified as the vehicle above, and taken to the Warwick house on March 11, 2020. She stated that the defendant **Victor Martinez** and the co-defendant kept them locked in a bedroom and demanded money. She stated that the defendant **Martinez** would point a gun at them and threaten to kill them if they didn't get more money. She stated the co-defendant Ramos, lived in the house, slept on the couch with a pistol, and guarded the aliens. K.A. also identified Demetrio Martinez-Bucio as guarding the aliens on one occasion when **Martinez** was gone from the residence. Bucio also leased the residence.

Agents interviewed H.S., a Sri Lankan national, who stated he left Sri Lanka on or about June 29, 2019. He explained that his parents paid \$20,000 for him to be smuggled into the United States. He crossed into the United States from Mexico and was taken to the residence on Warwick Rd. H.S. stated he was kept in a room that was locked from the outside. H.S. identified the co-defendant Ramos from a photo-lineup as one of the guards. H.S. also identified the defendant **Victor Martinez** as the one who drove him to the stash house on Warwick. He stated he was locked in the bedroom until he paid additional money and believed he had seen two guns in the residence.

Agents next interviewed K.K., a Sri Lankan national, who stated he departed his country destined for Dallas, Texas. According to K.K. he and his family paid \$7550 of the \$10,000 bill to start the smuggling event. At the stash house in Houston on Warwick, K.K. stated that he was regularly threatened that he would be killed if he didn't provide additional money. He stated the guards would carry a gun and would point it at the aliens telling them he ruled the house. K.K. described the gun as a black and white handgun. During a photo line-up, K.K. identified the co-defendant Ramos as a guard. He described Ramos as one of two people who demanded \$4000 from him. K.K. also identified the defendant **Victor Martinez** as manager of the house and frequently asking them for money. He described him as the person who initially picked them up in the Dodge Charger and took them to the house in Houston, locking them in the room. K.K. stated that defendant **Victor Martinez** would try to scare them by letting the aliens see him chamber a round in the pistol he was carrying. K.K. believed that the defendant **Victor Martinez** had only fed the group one time during their captivity. **Victor Martinez** also asked for the phone number of K.K.'s father, so he could call him to solicit more money from him.

#### **Breach of Plea Agreement**

14. If Defendant should fail in any way to fulfill completely all of the obligations under this plea agreement, the United States will be released from its obligations under the plea agreement, and Defendant's plea and sentence will stand. If at any time Defendant retains, conceals, or disposes of assets in violation of this plea agreement, or if Defendant knowingly withholds evidence or is otherwise not completely truthful with the United States, then the United States may move the Court to set aside the guilty plea and reinstate prosecution. Any information and documents that have been disclosed by Defendant, whether prior to or subsequent to this plea agreement, and all leads derived therefrom, will be used against defendant in any prosecution.



### **Restitution, Forfeiture, and Fines – Generally**

15. This Plea Agreement is being entered into by the United States on the basis of Defendant's express representation that he will make a full and complete disclosure of all assets over which he exercises direct or indirect control, or in which he has any financial interest. Defendant agrees not to dispose of any assets or take any action that would effect a transfer of property in which he has an interest, unless Defendant obtains the prior written permission of the United States.

16. Defendant agrees to make complete financial disclosure by truthfully executing a sworn financial statement (Form OBD-500 or similar form) within 14 days of signing this plea agreement. Defendant agrees to authorize the release of all financial information requested by the United States, including, but not limited to, executing authorization forms permitting the United States to obtain tax information, bank account records, credit histories, and social security information. Defendant agrees to discuss and answer any questions by the United States relating to Defendant's complete financial disclosure.

17. Defendant agrees to take all steps necessary to pass clear title to forfeitable assets to the United States and to assist fully in the collection of restitution and fines, including, but not limited to, surrendering title, executing a warranty deed, signing a consent decree, stipulating to facts regarding the transfer of title and the basis for the forfeiture, and signing any other documents necessary to effectuate such transfer. Defendant also agrees to direct any banks which have custody of his assets to deliver all funds and records of such assets to the United States.

18. Defendant understands that forfeiture, restitution, and fines are separate components of sentencing and are separate obligations.

### **Restitution**

19. Defendant agrees to pay full restitution to the victim(s) regardless of the count(s) of conviction. Defendant understands and agrees that the Court will determine the amount of restitution to fully compensate the victim(s). Defendant agrees that restitution imposed by the Court will be due and payable immediately and that Defendant will not attempt to avoid or delay payment. Subject to the provisions of paragraph 5 above, Defendant waives the right to challenge in any manner, including by direct appeal or in a collateral proceeding, the restitution order imposed by the Court.

### **Forfeiture**

20. Defendant stipulates and agrees that the property listed in the indictment's Notice of Forfeiture (and in any supplemental Notices) is subject to forfeiture, and Defendant agrees to the forfeiture of that property.

21. Defendant agrees to waive any and all interest in any asset which is the subject of a related administrative or judicial forfeiture proceeding, whether criminal or civil, federal or state.

22. Defendant consents to the order of forfeiture becoming final as to Defendant immediately following this guilty plea, pursuant to Federal Rule of Criminal Procedure 32.2(b)(4)(A).

23. Subject to the provisions of paragraph 5 above, Defendant waives the right to challenge the forfeiture of property in any manner, including by direct appeal or in a collateral proceeding.

### **Fines**

24. Defendant understands that under the Sentencing Guidelines the Court is permitted to order Defendant to pay a fine that is sufficient to reimburse the government for the costs of any imprisonment or term of supervised release, if any. Defendant agrees that any fine imposed by the Court will be due and payable immediately, and Defendant will not attempt to avoid or delay payment. Subject to the provisions of paragraph 5 above, Defendant waives the right to challenge the fine in any manner, including by direct appeal or in a collateral proceeding.

### **Complete Agreement**

25. This written plea agreement, consisting of 14 pages, including the attached addendum of Defendant and his attorney, constitutes the complete plea agreement between the United States, Defendant, and Defendant's counsel. No promises or representations have been made by the United States except as set forth in writing in this plea agreement. Defendant acknowledges that no threats have been made against him and that he is pleading guilty freely and voluntarily because he is guilty.

26. Any modification of this plea agreement must be in writing and signed by all parties.

Filed at Houston, Texas, on July 02, 2021.

  
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Defendant

Subscribed and sworn to before me on July 02, 2021.

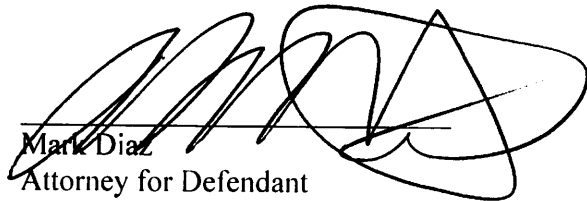
NATHAN OCHSNER, Clerk  
UNITED STATES DISTRICT CLERK

By: /s/ Jennelle Gonzalez  
Deputy United States District Clerk

APPROVED:

Jennifer B. Lowery  
Acting United States Attorney

By: Richard W. Bennett  
Richard W. Bennett  
Assistant United States Attorney  
Southern District of Texas  
Telephone: 713-567-9000

  
Mark Diaz  
Attorney for Defendant

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS  
HOUSTON DIVISION**

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

**v.**

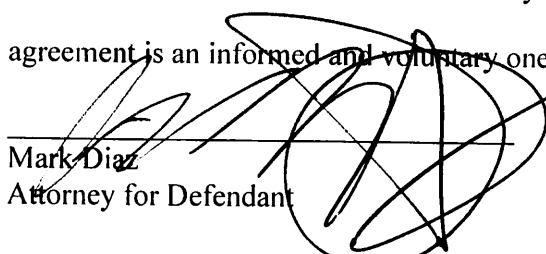
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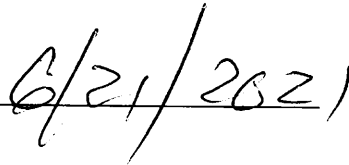
**CRIMINAL NO. 4:20-CR-231 (02)**

**PLEA AGREEMENT -- ADDENDUM**


I have fully explained to Defendant his rights with respect to the pending indictment. I have reviewed the provisions of the United States Sentencing Commission's Guidelines Manual and Policy Statements and I have fully and carefully explained to Defendant the provisions of those Guidelines which may apply in this case. I have also explained to Defendant that the Sentencing Guidelines are only advisory and the court may sentence Defendant up to the maximum allowed by statute per count of conviction. Further, I have carefully reviewed every part of this plea agreement with Defendant. To my knowledge, Defendant's decision to enter into this agreement is an informed and voluntary one.

  
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Mark Diaz  
Attorney for Defendant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
6/21/2021

I have consulted with my attorney and fully understand all my rights with respect to the indictment pending against me. My attorney has fully explained, and I understand, all my rights with respect to the provisions of the United States Sentencing Commission's Guidelines Manual which may apply in my case. I have read and carefully reviewed every part of this plea agreement with my attorney. I understand this agreement and I voluntarily agree to its terms.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Victor Martinez  
Defendant

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date